

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, February 26, 1880

Letter written by Alexander Graham Bell to his Mother. Washington, D. C. — February 26th, 1880. Dear Mama:

Happy little Elsie has kissed her “baby-sister” good-night — and is now in bed. Mabel's tired eyes have closed and I am alone with my thoughts. Another life added to ours! It seems so strange that I cannot realize it fully. It sets me thinking of Life itself and of the mysteries that surround it.

It seems so strange to see the little baby-face lying in its crib! — It looks so real — and yet where was that life a year ago?

Somehow or other I cannot bring myself to believe in immortality at the end of life unless I also believe in it before the beginning! Is Life eternal both ways? — Or is “Immortality” a figment of the imagination — a product of the fear of death — the dread of annihilation? I am more and more inclined to think — the latter.

However — to quit perplexing thoughts — let me come down to facts. Baby is a fact — a real substantial fact — a kicking, screaming, undeniable fact — whose existence it is impossible now to ignore! If Mabel were awake I have no doubt she would object to this way of speaking of her baby — but I can assure you that although baby now generally remains as quiet as a kitten and as undemonstrative as a doll — still at the time of her birth she roared so loud — that she was heard at Mr. Hubbard's house in 2 K Street — a full block away — by telephone! — and she objected in the most lively and demonstrative manner possible to her entrance into life. But the harder she kicked the more alive she became — and at last she gave in and became reconciled to the idea of becoming a peaceable and much-admired member of Society.

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She has remained in this frame of mind ever since — and now rarely breaks the silence of the night (or “day” for that matter) — with more than a grunt — which nurse translates into the word “supper” — a verb active — in the imperative mood!!

Baby has a full crop of jet-black hair and eyes that try hard to be hazel but don't succeed. She is much lighter than Elsie was at birth — both in complexion and in weight — and is just as unmistakeably a pretty baby as Elsie was an ugly one. Mabel is anxious to call her “Marion” after Mrs. Hubbard's youngest daughter who died in childhood — but we have not decided yet. Mabel is making a wonderful recovery — and is now able to make her appearance on the sofa in my study — although not strong enough yet to put her feet to the ground. She has probably told you that Mr. Hubbard has purchased a building-lot for us here — and proposes erecting a house for us. It would be so nice if you could come and live some where near us. Newton Lower Falls is too far away.

If you wish to continue living in the country — what do you say to our joining you in building or buying — a country or 3 sea-side home large enough for us all in the summer-time?

Love to Lizzie, Mary and Louisa and a heartfelt of love to you and Papa.

Your loving son, Alec. Mrs. A. M. Bell, Brantford, Ontario, Canada.